

**Text: 1 Cor 10.23-33**

As we move through Corinthians, we will keep our place by developing the broad outline we started with.

**I. Introduction (1.1-9)****II. Conditions reported to Paul (1.10-6.20)**

- A. Divisions in the church (1.10-4.21)
- B. Lack of discipline in the church (5.1-6.20)

**III. Questions asked of Paul (7.1-16.4)**

<sup>1</sup> Cor 7.1 ¶ Now concerning the things about which you wrote...

“The remainder of the body of this epistle deals with questions that the Corinthians had asked Paul in a letter. Paul introduced each of these with the phrase *peri de* (‘now concerning,’ 7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1, 12).”<sup>1</sup>

- A. Questions about marriage (7.1-40)
- B. Questions about things sacrificed to idols (8.1-11.1)

**Key to understanding: What is the issue?**

“things sacrificed to idols” = εἰδωλόθυτος, “idol sacrifices”

<sup>1</sup> Cor 8.10 For if someone sees you, who have knowledge, **dining in an idol's temple**, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be strengthened to eat things sacrificed to idols?

“an animal sacrificed in the presence of an idol and eaten in the temple precincts.”<sup>2</sup>

**My outline for the passage:**

1. Weakness of the brother (8)
2. Worth of the gospel (9)
3. Wickedness of the heart (10)

<sup>1</sup> Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), 1 Co 7.1.

<sup>2</sup> Ben Witherington III, “Not So Idle Thoughts About Eidolothuton,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 44, no. 2 (1993): 240.

## Review Questions:

1. What is the conclusion of the “weakness of the brother” teaching with respect to the question about consuming “things sacrificed to idols”?  
***For the sake of weaker brothers, don't harm them.***
2. What is the application of the “worth of the gospel” teaching with respect to the question about consuming “things sacrificed to idols”?  
***Considering the worth of the gospel, don't compromise it.***
3. Why do I say “application” instead of “conclusion” when we are talking about the “worth of the gospel”?  
***no direct teaching in 1 Cor 9***

“This whole chapter [chapter 9] is an explanation of the last verse of the preceding chapter. More generally it clarifies the importance of limiting our legitimate liberty as Christians for higher goals, namely, the glory of God and the welfare of other people.”<sup>3</sup>

4. What is the final reason for NOT partaking of “things sacrificed to idols” according to chapter 10.1-22?  
**There is great danger of getting entangled in a spiritual compromise with demonic spirits**

## 1 Corinthians 10.23-33

What part of the previous arguments do the general principles of vv. 23-24 point to?

### The weaker brother argument

What objections might rise after all the teaching from 1 Cor 8 to 1 Cor 10.22?

1. “what about the idol meat we know is in the marketplace?”
2. “what about when we are in someone else's house and we know they buy idol meat”

What is the answer to the first objection? (25-26) **don't worry about meat sold in the meat market, meat is just meat**

<sup>3</sup> Constable, *Expository Notes*, 1 Co 9.27.

**Note:** a new term is introduced in verse 28. It isn't εἰδωλόθυτος, "idol sacrifices," that is, "an animal sacrificed in the presence of an idol and eaten in the temple precincts."<sup>4</sup> Rather, it is ἱερόθυτος, "sacrificial meat" – a synonym with this distinction, it is just meat, it has nothing to do with where it is consumed.

What is the answer to the second objection? (27-28) **"don't ask, don't tell" — if your host doesn't mention it, don't ask; if he does, don't eat**

What is the reason for the answer to the second objection? (28b-29a) **you need to take care for your host's conscience, not your own**

"We might think that in such a situation Paul would have advocated exercising Christian liberty and eating the meat, but he did not. He advocated abstaining, not because such meat was out of bounds for believers. It was not out of bounds. Normally Christians could eat such meat. He advocated abstaining for the sake of the pagan's moral consciousness. Specifically, if the Christian ate the meat, the pagan might conclude that his guest was doing something Christians should not do. He would be wrong, of course. Yet Paul advocated not violating the pagan's understanding of what Christians should or should not do rather than have the Christian instruct the pagan about Christian freedom at the table."<sup>5</sup>

Paul asks two rhetorical questions in vv. 29b and 30, "why is my freedom judged by another's conscience?" and "If I partake with thankfulness, why am I slandered concerning that for which I give thanks?"

What argument is he countering? **"well, you eat of sacrificial meat all the time" i.e., "you are an hypocrite"**

Paul makes it clear that he is concerned about the consciences and souls of other men. He knows meat offered to idols is acceptable outside the idol temple unless it is raised as an issue by another party.

How does Paul sum up his viewpoint? (31-33)

**God's glory is first, therefore give no offense of conscience to anyone, for the sake of evangelizing everyone**

<sup>4</sup> Ben Witherington III, "Not So Idle Thoughts About Eidolothuton," *Tyndale Bulletin* 44, no. 2 (1993): 240.

<sup>5</sup> Constable, 1 Co 10.28.

## Modern Applications? (Most issues are probably not exact parallels)

Alcohol

Music

Entertainment like Movies/TV